

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CONAKR 02271 051434Z

ACTION AF-10

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FM AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3769

C O N F I D E N T I A L CONAKRY 2271

AF ONLY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PFOR, GV, US, CU

SUBJECT: CUBANS IN GUINEA

1. WIRELESS FILE DECEMBER 2 QUOTED AMBASSADOR ANDREW YOUNG AS FOLLOWS: "ESSENTIALLY WHAT THE CUBANS ARE DOING HAS COME UNDER QUESTION IN ETHIOPIA, IN GUINEA, IN UGANDA AND OTHER PLACES WHERE THEIR MILITARY ROLE SEEMS TO BE TO SUPPORT A REPRESSIVE REGIME THAT MAINTAINS POWER BY KILLING OFF THE OPPOSITION."

2. THERE ARE COMMONLY BELIEVED TO BE ABOUT 200 CUBANS IN GUINEA. AS FAR AS THE EMBASSY CAN TELL, MOST OF THEM-- A MILITARY ENGINEERING GROUP--ARE ENGAGED IN BUILDING A REMOTE PROVINCIAL ROAD FROM KISSIDOUGOU TO KANKAN; THEY HAVE NO INTERNAL SECURITY ROLE. THERE IS A MUCH SMALLER NUMBER ADVISING GUINEAN BORDER DEFENSE UNITS AND TRAINING UNITS. SEKOU TOURE'S BODY GUARD IS REPORTED TO HAVE ONE-TWO DOZEN CUBANS ATTACHED TO IT, ALTHOUGH HANDPICKED GUINEAN PERSONNEL SEEM FULLY CAPABLE OF PERFORMING BODYGUARD MISSION ALONE. NONE OF THE ABOVE CUBANS HAS BEEN USED, SO FAR AS IS KNOWN, IN "KILLING OFF THE OPPOSITION" OR IN DIRECT SUPPORT OF REPRESSION. EMBASSY IS MEANWHILE TRYING HARD TO IMPROVE ITS INFORMATION ON THIS ISSUE.

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3. EMBASSY DOES NOT PUT GUINEA'S HUMAN-RIGHTS RECORD, POOR AS IT HAS BEEN, IN THE SAME LEAGUE WITH ETHIOPIA OR UGANDA, WHERE OUTRIGHT SLAUGHTER OF MANY THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN COMMONPLACE DURING RECENT TIMES. THE ORDER OF MAGNITUDE AND KIND OF BLOODLETTING, FOR ONE THING, ARE VASTLY DIFFERENT. MOREOVER, WE HAVE POTENTIALLY USEFUL

PRIVATE DIALOGUE ON HUMAN-RIGHTS TENUOUSLY DEVELOPING
WITH GOG. IT MERITS NURTURING. BUT DIALOGUE WILL BE
HARDER OR IMPOSSIBLE TO PURSUE HERE ONCE GOG GETS IDEA
THAT SENIOR U.S. SPOKESMEN ARE DELIBERATELY SETTING UP
GUINEA AS A PUBLIC PUNCHING BAG. WE OUGHT TO GIVE
DIALOGUE A CHANCE FIRST.
MAINLAND

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